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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/046,759	01/17/2002	Atsushi Watanabe	100353-00093	2648

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EXAMINER

CERVETTI, DAVID GARCIA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2136

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/046,759

Applicant(s)

WATANABE ET AL.

Examiner

David G. Cervetti

Art Unit

2136

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 January 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/17/02.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: "EEPROM" (page 3, line 7), "LSI" (page 11, line 10). While well known in the art, these terms have not been defined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. **Claims 1-4, 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guthery (US Patent Number: 6,567,915), and further in view of Kambayashi et al. (US Patent Number: 6,772,133).**

Regarding claim 1, Guthery teaches a semiconductor integrated circuit (figure 2), comprising: one or more function blocks (figure 2, reference character 64); a nonvolatile memory unit which stores therein coded information (figure 2, reference character 58); and a decoder circuit which decodes the information stored in said nonvolatile memory unit, and makes one of the function blocks either usable or unusable depending on the decoded information (figure 2, reference character 62). Guthery does not expressly disclose the use of license information. However, Kambayashi et al. teach using license information for authentication (column 13, lines 55-67, column 10, lines 35-67).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time

Art Unit: 2136

the invention was made to include license information in the system of Guthery along with the other private information Guthery's system provides (passcode, keys, certificates, files, authentication table, etc). One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so because it was well known in the art to use license information for authentication purposes (Kambayashi et al., column 2, lines 1-55).

Regarding claim 2, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 1 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches a status unit that has at least part of the decoded license information stored therein in such a manner as to be accessible from an exterior of said semiconductor integrated circuit (column 6, lines 40-67, column 7, lines 1-55).

Regarding claim 3, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 1 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches a calendar circuit which indicates a current date and time, wherein said decoder circuit makes said one of the function blocks usable in response to a finding that the current date and time indicated by the calendar circuit is within a valid period indicated by the decoded license information, and makes said one of the function blocks unusable in response to a finding that the current date and time indicated by the calendar circuit is after a valid period indicated by the decoded license information (column 12, lines 40-60).

Regarding claim 4, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 1 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches a counter circuit that counts a number indicative of how many times said one of the

function blocks is used, wherein said decoder circuit makes said one of the function blocks usable in response to a finding that the number counted by said counter circuit is within a number of valid use indicated by the decoded license information, and makes said one of the function blocks unusable in response to a finding that the number counted by said counter circuit exceeds the number of valid use indicated by the decoded license information (column 10, lines 55-65).

Regarding claim 6, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 1 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches wherein coding and decoding of the license information is encrypting and decrypting that prevents the license information in said nonvolatile memory unit from being illegally rewritten (column 6, lines 40-67, column 7, lines 1-55).

Regarding claim 7, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 1 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches wherein said decoder circuit includes: a decoder which decodes the license information stored in said nonvolatile memory unit (column 6, lines 11-50); a license register which stores therein the decoded license information decoded by said decoder (column 6, lines 50-67, the private storage area); and a control circuit which makes said one of the function blocks either usable or unusable depending on the information stored in said license register (column 5, lines 40-67, column 6, lines 50-67).

Regarding claim 8, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 7 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches wherein said control circuit controls a chip enable signal of said one of the function blocks in

order to make said one of the function blocks either usable or unusable (column 5, lines 40-67, column 6, lines 50-67).

Regarding claim 9, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. teaches the limitations as set forth under claim 7 above. Furthermore, Guthery teaches wherein said control circuit controls a clock signal of said one of the function blocks in order to make said one of the function blocks either usable or unusable (column 5, lines 40-67, column 6, lines 50-67).

4. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guthery and Kambayashi et al. as applied to claim 4 above, and further in view of Ostrovsky et al. (US Patent Number: 5,123,045).

Regarding claim 5, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. does not expressly disclose a license encoder circuit which encodes the number counted by said counter circuit, wherein the number encoded by said license encoder circuit is stored in said nonvolatile memory unit as updated license information. However, Ostrovsky et al. teach a license encoder circuit which encodes the number counted by said counter circuit, wherein the number encoded by said license encoder circuit is stored in said nonvolatile memory unit as updated license information (column 3, lines 40-56, column 8, lines 1-20). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to encode the contents of a counter and store the encoded content in memory. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so because it was well known in the art to encrypt/ encode data to prevent

Art Unit: 2136

adversaries from replacing the contents of physical memory (Ostrovsky et al., column 3, lines 40-56).

5. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guthery and Kambayashi et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Iguchi (US Patent Number: 6,198,669).

Regarding claim 10, the combination of Guthery and Kambayashi et al. does not expressly disclose wherein said nonvolatile memory unit receives the coded license information from an external LSI tester, and no external pin is provided for a purpose of receiving the coded license information. However, Iguchi teaches nonvolatile memory receiving information from an external LSI tester (column 1, lines 10-40). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the coded license information from an external LSI tester, and no external pin is provided for a purpose of receiving the coded license information. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so because to provide data to memories of semiconductor integrated circuits from an external LSI tester was well known in the art (Iguchi, column 1, lines 30-37).


Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David G. Cervetti whose telephone number is (571) 272-5861. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00 am - 5:00 pm, off on Wednesday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ayaz R. Sheikh can be reached on (571) 272-3795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DGC


6/10/05